

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND
UNIT 30400, BOX 1000
APO AE 09128

DIRECTIVE
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CIVILIAN PERSONNEL

Overseas Tour Rotation Policy

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1. **Summary.** To reaffirm compliance with the Department of Defense (DoD) policy limiting civilian employment in foreign areas to five years, and to establish approval criteria as well as approval levels for extension of civilian tours. This memorandum supercedes Staff Memorandum 30-2, dated 13 Jan 1997 and all previous guidance regarding this subject.
 2. **Applicability.** This Directive is applicable to all competitive service U.S. civilian employees assigned to HQ USEUCOM, separate staff activities and agencies, USEUCOM Security Assistance Organizations/Offices of Defense Cooperation, the George C. Marshall Center, the Joint Analysis Center and other USEUCOM field activities.
 3. **Internal Control Systems.** This Directive does not contain internal control provisions and is not subject to the requirements of the internal management control program.
 4. **Suggested Improvements.** The proponent of this Directive is ECJ1-C, Office of the Civilian Personnel Advisor. Recommendations for changes or corrections should be sent to HQ USEUCOM, Attn: ECJ1-C, Unit 30400 Box 1000, APO AE 09028.
 5. **References.**
 - a. DoD Civilian Personnel Manual, Chap 301, "Rotation of Employees from Foreign Areas," 24 Aug 88.
 - b. DASD (CPP) policy memorandum, subject, "Five-Year Limitation on Foreign Employment," 20 Mar 97.
 - c. DoD Civilian Personnel Manual, Chap 771, "Administrative Grievance System," 20 Dec 95.

This Directive supersedes Staff Memorandum 30-2, dated 13 Jan 1997.

6. **Civilian Tour Rotation Policy.**

a. Per references (a) and (b), DoD limits continuous civilian employment in foreign areas to five years. Employees hired in competitive service positions or appointed to positions leading to the competitive service (e.g., Veteran's Readjustment Act appointees) must, as a condition of their employment, sign an appropriate rotation agreement acknowledging the five-year limitation on foreign area employment.

b. Initial overseas tour lengths are described in Volume II of the Joint Travel Regulations (JTR). Extensions beyond the initial overseas tour that do NOT exceed the five-year limitation may be made at management's discretion. All prior service in a civilian appropriated fund capacity, which has not been interrupted by a CONUS residence of one continuous year or longer, is counted in computing the five-year period - regardless of the type of appointment. The approval level for these extensions will be at the Director/Major Staff Office Chief level and coordinated with the appropriate servicing personnel office. When making tour extension decisions, managers should take into consideration such factors as:

(1) Impact on mission/program requirements.

(2). Ability to recruit.

(3). The organization's ability to offer continued, meaningful employment throughout the period of the extension.

(4). Whether or not the extension will result in the employee's loss of guaranteed return rights to a CONUS position.

c. Per reference (c), a manager's decision not to extend an overseas tour is excluded from the DoD administrative grievance procedure.

d. Reference (a) describes the DoD policy regarding application of the five-year limitation on overseas employment and outlines specific types of positions and employees that are exempt. Exemptions include:

(1). Positions that require frequent contact with officials of the host nation and require detailed knowledge of the culture, mores, laws, customs or governmental processes of the host nation. A position shall not be placed in this category unless the position description clearly specifies that the above duties and special knowledge are required.

(2). Employees who are family members accompanying military or Federal civilian employees stationed in the foreign area – regardless of the type of appointment they are serving under.

(3). Employees who have been continuously employed in the foreign area prior to 1 April 1966.

(4). Educators of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools System.

(5). Employees in the Senior Executive Service.

(6). Individuals employed at the GS-6 level or below, or as non-supervisory wage grade employees since August 1988, and who have remained continuously employed at those GS or WG levels.

e. DoD policy limiting employment in foreign areas applies only to employees in the competitive service; therefore, employees in excepted service positions (e.g., Civilian Intelligence Personnel Management System positions, Title X Faculty Positions or attorneys) are not affected by this policy.

f. Extensions beyond five years may be approved on a case by case basis. DoD guidance contained in reference (b) states that “case by case extensions are intended to provide short-term management flexibility based on local needs and conditions and are not intended to provide for permanent employment in the foreign area.” In addition, extensions should be granted only in “extremely rare situations.” Compelling operational reasons have historically been used at EUCOM to justify extensions and encompass the following considerations:

(1). Long term extensions requests – more than one year – may be granted in situations where failure to extend the civilian employee will have an adverse affect on the organizations ability to accomplish a specific mission or project. Only in those situations where the impact can be demonstrated to be more severe than could normally be expected under normal rotation of employees will extension requests be considered. In such cases, extensions will only be granted for a period long enough to complete the specific mission or project. Two-year extensions should not automatically be requested and will not be automatically granted. In no case will a single extension be granted that exceeds the equivalent of a renewal tour as defined in JTR Volume II.

(2). Extensions may also be granted when there is failure in the recruitment process to yield desired results. Requests for extensions using this justification must be able to demonstrate that documented recruiting efforts have failed to yield qualified applicants. Therefor, if the Directorate or Major Staff Office anticipates difficulty in recruiting for the position, it should advertise the position well in advance of the potential vacancy.

g. When making selections during the normal recruiting process, organizations will make certain that they are aware of an applicant’s status regarding the five-year limitation. Administrative tour extensions will not be granted to selectees for positions at USEUCOM unless it can be demonstrated that no other qualified candidate was available that could have completed the equivalent of a two year tour without requiring an extension. All requests for administrative tour extensions will be processed in accordance with the procedures specified in sub-paragraph (i) of this directive.

h. Short term extension of less than 6 months may be granted at the Directorate/Major Staff Office level for compassionate or personal reasons. Subsequent tour extensions will not be

considered once a compassionate tour extension has been granted. All short-term extensions granted for compassionate reasons will be routed through the Office of the Civilian Personnel Advisor, ECJ1-C, prior to being forwarded to the servicing civilian personnel office for processing. The following are examples of situations that would warrant short-term extensions:

- (1). To allow children to complete the current school year.
- (2). To allow an employee or spouse to complete an educational program.
- (3). To allow an employee or family member to complete medical treatment.

i. Extensions of up to one year may be granted to allow an employee to retire if the employee will be eligible to retire within one year of the extension request. Subsequent extension requests will not be considered. All extension requests granted to allow an employee to retire will be routed through the Office of the Civilian Personnel Advisor, ECJ1-C, prior to being forwarded to the servicing personnel office.

j. All extension requests which result in extending civilian employees subject to the DoD rotation policy beyond five years shall be approved by the Director, Manpower, Personnel and Administration, ECJ1. Requests will be routed through the Office of the Civilian Personnel Advisor, ECJ1-C, and must contain the length of the tour extension requested, a narrative description of the compelling reasons which justify the extension, a completed Form AE 690-300.301B-R (Nov 95) and any other supporting documentation. Extension requests should be forwarded to ECJ1-C as soon as a management decision regarding tour extension has been made. In order to allow both management and the employee the time to comply with administrative requirements, the decision to extend an employee should be made 8-9 months prior to the employee's established rotation date (DEROS). Supervisors should contact their servicing personnel office to establish the DEROS of their current civilian employees.

FOR THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

OFFICIAL

MICHAEL A. CANAVAN
Lieutenant General, USA
Chief of Staff

SUSAN M. MEYER
LTC, USA
Adjutant General

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